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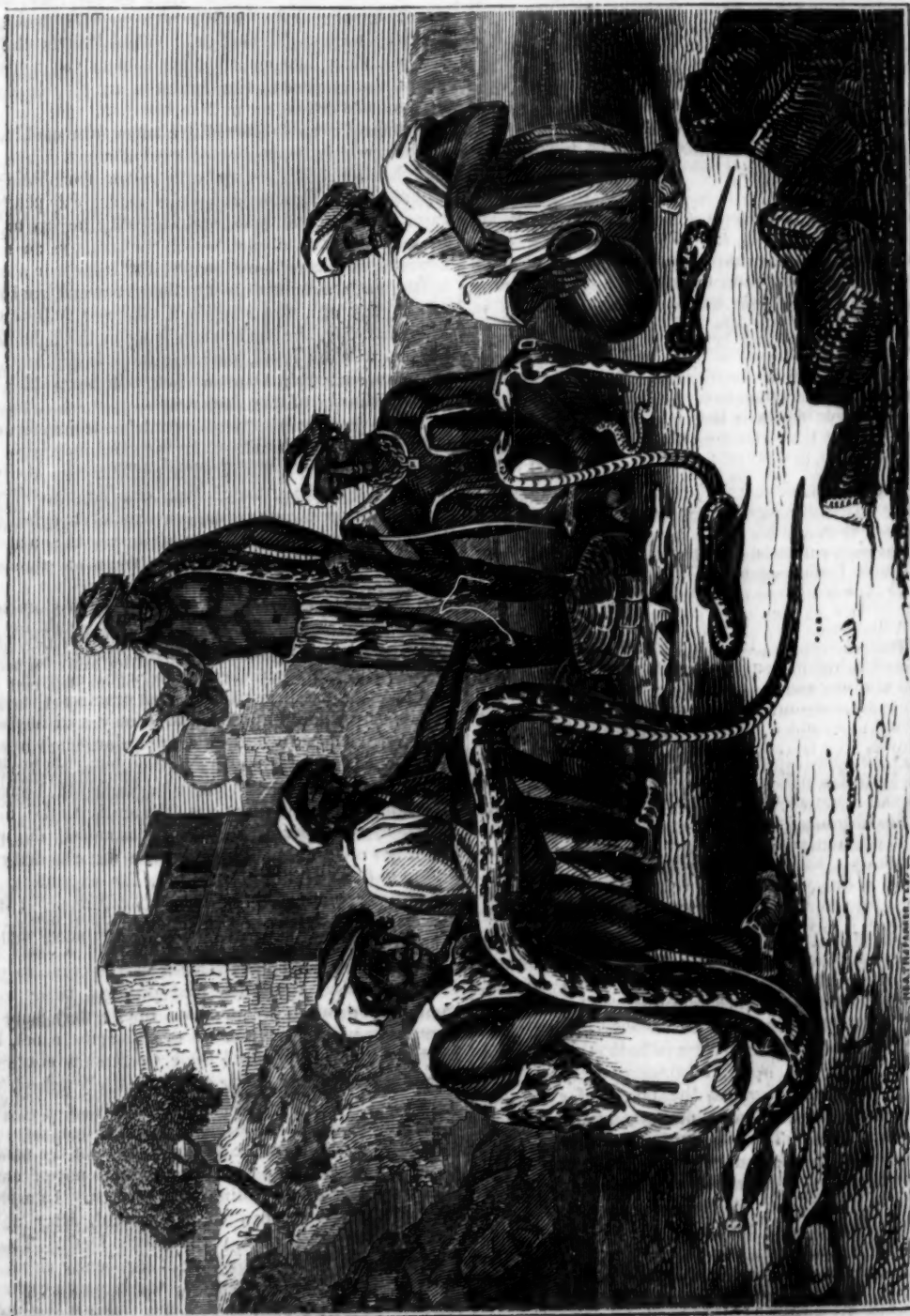
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THE INDIAN SNAKE-CHARMERS.

## THE INDIAN SNAKE-CHARMERS.

THE jugglers of India have been long celebrated for their extraordinary dexterity, and, by the natives generally, they are supposed to have intercourse with demons. These vagrants are frequently applied to as the bravos of Spain and Italy formerly were, to get rid of obnoxious persons, whom they contrive to despatch by poison, when well paid for the service, and pretend that their influence with some malignant spirit has produced a signal retribution upon the enemy of their employer, who they boldly assert was no longer fit to live.

The various tribes of vagrants who live by different mountebank arts, though universally despised, are universally dreaded. They are outcasts; and yet the awe which they inspire, gives them a sort of confidence, and obtains for them, under certain circumstances, a forced respect, which renders their social condition far less deplorable than that of the Pariah tribes generally. The most common class among the jugglers, and by far the most harmless, is that of the snake-catchers, who infest the villages and fairs, exhibiting their snakes, and accompanying their movements with a music, if it may be so called, from which all melody is banished, and the most frightful confusion of sounds produced, that jars upon musical nerves worse than the old-fashioned wedding accompaniments of marrow-bones and cleavers in this country, upon the ears of a young bride. They carry their serpents in round wicker baskets with flat bottoms, in which the creatures lie coiled up in a state of lethargy, until roused by the harsh tones of their keepers' flutes. It is astonishing to see how they are affected by the tones of those rude instruments, for no sooner do their charmers begin to blow, than the snakes raise their heads, gradually erect themselves, waving their necks to and fro, as if in a state of ecstasy.

The hooded-snake is always the most prominent, one of which is represented in the print, with the hood spread close by the hand of the man who is holding a pitcher. The rock-snake, held by the person in the opposite corner of the picture is innoxious, but the bite of a hooded-snake is generally fatal; nevertheless, the charmers do not extract the poisonous fangs as is commonly supposed, but exhibit these reptiles with all their powers of mischief unimpaired, and it is the perfect knowledge of their habits that secures them from the danger of being bitten\*. The rock-snake is usually from twelve to sixteen feet long, of a sluggish nature, and suffers itself to be handled without making any effort to escape. The man who shows it, ties it round his neck like a lady's boa, and coils it into all sorts of fantastic figures, the creature remaining all the while perfectly passive.

This class of jugglers perform numberless tricks with these reptiles, taking even such as are venomous in their hands, and putting them against their cheeks with perfect impunity. They always pretend that the fangs are extracted, in order to prevent alarm in those before whom they exhibit them. The general opinion concerning these pretenders, is that they possess the power of charming all venomous snakes, and of commanding their perfect obedience. The medium of communication they profess to be the musical instrument, the sound of which appears to infuse into the dumb captives new life and energy. "The same art," says the Abbé Dubois, "seems to have been laid claim to in other ancient nations; witness the allegory of the prophet, where he compares the obstinacy of a hardened

sinner to a serpent that shuts its ear against the voice of the charmer." The allegory to which this writer refers, is contained in the fourth and fifth verses of the fifty-eighth psalm: "their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of the charmers, charming never so wisely."

Whenever a poisonous snake is known to be in the vicinity of a dwelling-house, the snake-charmer is sent for to remove it, and he always undertakes to get rid of the obnoxious intruder for a trifling gratuity, but generally receives the money without abating the nuisance which he is employed to remedy; for it commonly happens that as soon as he approaches the hole where the reptile has taken shelter, it crawls further in. When this is the case the man has his remedy; he resorts to imposture, and thus terminates the business to his employer's entire satisfaction, as well as his own. His mode of proceeding is as follows. He takes one of his tame snakes, which he carries concealed about his person, and having made every one retire from the spot where he is to commence his charm, secretly places the tame snake in the hole, and instantly begins to blow upon the favourite pipe, which the creature no sooner hears than it creeps out, when the impostor seizes it by the neck, receives his stipulated reward, and bears off in triumph the supposed offender. If on the following day, the snake remaining in the hole should happen to show itself, the same farce is repeated, and the man receives his second fee, accompanied by the earnest thanks of the donor.

These jugglers frequently contrive to impose upon the superstitious Hindoos, by persuading them that their houses are infested with snakes. In order to make this appear, they place one or two of their tame ones in some of the crevices of the building. They then enter the house with all the assumed wisdom of the ancient Sages, begin to pipe such music as would scare any other creature but a snake into the deepest recesses of its retreat, and when the reptile appears, they snatch it up, put it immediately into its wicker prison, and thus the enchantment ends. These pretended enchanters will sometimes go into every house in a village, and practise the same deceits, and where imposition is so easy, and impunity so certain, it is no wonder that there are such a number of cheating vagabonds and quacks of all kinds in every part of India. It must be confessed, however, that among the jugglers are frequently to be found persons who perform feats of manual dexterity scarcely credible. They possess an elasticity of body, and a flexibility of limb, far exceeding any thing ever witnessed in colder latitudes. I may mention one or two of their cunning juggles, and then a feat of physical activity which I have witnessed more than once. These people come to your house in broad day-light, and perform their tricks upon the ground before your door; they have no cunningly-planned tables to disguise their art, but only a few implements of their profession contained in a small basket. Being almost entirely naked, they have not those resources common to all conjurors in other countries.

One of their favourite tricks is to take the seed of a mango, which they put into a small pot of earth, about the size of an ordinary flower-pot. In a short time the earth is seen to heave, and, after a few seconds, the head of a plant peeps forth. To the astonishment of the beholder it gradually rises, the buds swell, the leaves unfold, the blossom expands, the fruit forms, grows, and ripens, when it is plucked and presented to you, and always turns out to be a

\* For a further explanation of this subject, see *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. XI., p. 143.

very excellent mango. The impression on the mind of the beholder is so vivid, and the whole effect so overpowering, that he really fancies he sees the various operations of the growth as I have described. The deception is so perfect, that the reality of the thing never for a moment loses its hold upon the imagination, although the palpable fact of the mango-tree being as large as an English oak, whereas the counterfeit does not rise much higher than a currant-bush, sufficiently attests the delusion; it is, nevertheless, altogether, a most remarkable deception. The beholder, however, I should say, is never allowed to approach near to the juggler while this operation is going on.

Another very common trick, but less extraordinary, is to cover the ground before your door, to the extent of several feet, with growing flowers. The principal enchanter spreads upon the earth a large coarse cloth, about the size of a sheet, over which he mutters his potent spell; he then suddenly raises it, and the whole space underneath is overspread with flowers, "of all hues and fragrance" peculiar to that fruitful climate. He again spreads the sheet, and raising it after a few moments, there is no longer a flower to be seen.

Upon one occasion, after I had seen this done, a tall stout bamboo, forty feet long, was fixed upright in the ground, sufficiently firm to bear the weight of a heavy man. About five feet from the top there was a transverse pole fastened to the upright bamboo with strong cords, the whole forming a lofty cross. When all was ready, a short active Hindoo, somewhat beyond the middle age, with compact limbs and rigid muscularity of frame, approached the cross, grasped the shaft, and using his hands and feet with equal dexterity, climbed to the cross-bar with the ease and agility of a cat. Placing himself on his back on one of the projecting ends of the transverse pole, he folded his arms, and lay so still that every muscle of his body appeared in a state of complete repose. In a moment he sprang upon his feet without any apparent preparation or perceptible movement of his limbs; he then threw himself horizontally upon the point of the upright bamboo, and spun round with a velocity quite distressing to behold; one while turning on his back, and another on his stomach, changing his position with a quickness and precision that baffles description. He now placed his head upon the extremity of the pole, shook his feet in the air, and raised his arms with the most distressing animation. Whilst he was thus occupied, eight brass balls were severally thrown to him, which he caught and danced into the air one after the other, throwing them in various directions above and round him, when, on a sudden, he sprang upon his feet, standing upright upon a diameter of not more than two inches and a half, and caught every ball, without allowing one to fall to the ground. He next performed the most extraordinary feats upon the cross-pole, having nothing but his arms to balance him, throwing a twelve-pound cannon-ball over his head, catching it below his right shoulder, and by the mere muscular force repelling it back again as if it had been ejected from the hand. After suspending himself by the chin, by the toes, and heels, he dropped from the transverse beam to the ground, a height of full thirty feet, and received our benefactions with a graceful salaam.

One cannot help lamenting, in seeing the singular talents exhibited by the jugglers in India, that they should be invariably such depraved persons; but this is one of the grievous results of those divisions into caste, which is the cause of all the social distractions so notoriously existing among the Hindoo population.

J. H. C.

### THE ADMIRABLE CRICHTON.

PRODIGES of learning, as they are called, have generally failed to leave behind them satisfactory proofs of their amazing talent. This is instanced in the case of the distinguished person whose portrait is annexed. So regularly has his fame been handed down from age to age, that, even now, when we wish to express the idea of an universal genius, we style the character "An admirable Crichton," and the force of compliment can no further go. But there are very few really authentic documents to illustrate his history, the principal details of which have generally been drawn from the romantic memoir of his life, written by Sir Thomas Urquhart: and if we were allowed to judge of Crichton's mental powers, by the few specimens of his pen which are left to us, we should hesitate to confirm the report of former ages concerning his merits. The times, however, and with them the public tastes, are changed.

During the period in which Crichton flourished, the scholars of Europe were divided into two great classes,—the followers of Plato, and those of Aristotle, who puzzled themselves and others amidst the mazes of philosophy; not that "*Divine philosophy*" of which the poet sung:

As musical as is Apollo's lute,  
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,  
Where no crude surfeit reigns;

but the harsh and crabbed philosophy of the schoolmen; a thorough acquaintance with the writings of such authors as Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus\*, was the test of scholarship in those darker days of European literature. There are other reasons for such a genius as Crichton having been the idol of his own time. His qualities were personally attractive and engaging. Possessed of a handsome countenance and noble figure; though a mere youth, an excellent disputer; a graceful rider, fencer, actor, and musician, it is no wonder that he carried off the palm from his equals in age, and at his early death, (a circumstance highly favourable to youthful fame,) left a title of honour, which, for its comprehensive character, stands without a rival in the annals of biography.

JAMES CRICHTON was born at Elicock castle, in a little island on the lake of Cluny, in Perthshire, in 1560. His father, a person of good family, was Lord Advocate of Scotland; and his uncle was bishop of Dunkeld, having succeeded in that see the famous Gavin Douglas, the translator of Virgil, of whom Sir Walter Scott says:

More proud that in a har'rous age  
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,  
Than that beneath his away he held  
The bishopric of rich Dunkeld.

The mother of our hero was a Stuart, descended from Robert Duke of Albany, the uncle of James the First; so that if there was presumption, there was also truth in Crichton's boast, that he was sprung from Scottish kings. When very young he studied hard at the university of St. Andrew's; his masters being Rutherford, whose name is more known through his pupil, than any other source; and Buchanan, one of the most profound men of that or any other age. Crichton was scarcely more than twelve, when he took his degree as Bachelor of Arts; and at fourteen, he became Master of Arts, with distinguished praise. These early honours, however, did not spoil him for future exertions; they rather quickened his zeal, and we soon find him perfecting himself in the various branches of abstruse learning, and gaining the knowledge of eleven different languages. The custom then was, as indeed it

\* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. I. p. 97.



is now, to send young men of fortune or promise abroad, that together with a general enlargement of the mind, they might attain useful information for the service of their country and friends, on their return. Endowed by Providence with choice talents, which he had hitherto neither squandered nor abused, the clever and handsome Crichton made his way to Paris, renowned at that period both for learning and gaiety: and very soon, according to the prevailing fashion, he had challenges placarded about in various parts of the city, inviting all such as were well versed in any science, to dispute with him in the college of Navarre, either in prose or verse, on an



JAMES CRICHTON.

appointed day. But what provoked the envy and anger of the students in general, was that this young candidate for honour, instead of giving himself up to study in the mean time, or training for his literary combat, did nothing but amuse himself. He tilted, hawked and hunted, rode, played tennis and cards, and performed vocal and instrumental music. Yet when his trial of skill came on, which lasted for nine hours, he met with such complete success against all opponents, that the president of the college, with four professors, rising, and acknowledging the wonderful extent of his powers, presented him with a diamond ring and a purse of gold, the spectators joining in loud applause, and styling the young and splendid wrangler, "the admirable Crichton." After gathering these laurels, instead of yielding to languor, the natural result of great excitement and toil, he went on the day following his

great feat, to the Louvre, where, before the court, and a number of ladies, he carried away the ring at tilting, fifteen times successively.

Having continued to astonish the French for two years, he travelled to Rome, the focus of all that was entertaining and new in literature, and there lost no time in dispersing about the city copies of the following challenge, the original being in Italian:—"I, James Crichton, a Scot, will answer extempore to all questions, on any subject, which may be proposed;\*" and his admirers declare, that, although assailed by envy and malice, he acquitted himself before the Pope and Cardinals in a way which fully answered to his bold pretensions. In Venice, where he soon afterwards arrived, he became acquainted with the learned printer, Aldus Manutius, and (through his kind partiality,) with the other leading scholars in that city, who, desirous of having a public display of their young friend's talents, induced him, in the year 1580, to appear before the Doge and Senate. To see and hear him was to be delighted and amazed; and the unanimous vote of thanks from these high personages was followed by universal popularity, visitors crowding from all quarters into Venice with the hope of catching a glimpse, and hearing the voice of this favourite of nature. He, however, could not remain long at Venice, owing to ill-health, but went to the University at Padua. That city rejoiced at the opportunity of witnessing a spirited disputation, which he maintained against the professors for six hours without resting, and in which he pointed out the errors of Aristotle, making the matters on which he spoke plain to all, and ending with a most witty extempore oration in praise of ignorance! Jealous of the applause with which he had been every where greeted, some carping critics ventured to question the solidity of his attainments; he, therefore, engaged in an active controversy of six days, the issue of which decided every point in his favour, to the confusion of his adversaries.

Crichton now entered lists of a different kind, and leaving oratory for a time, handled with equal grace and effect another weapon, "more eloquent than words." There was then in Italy a savage and determined duellist, who knew his own skill, and in the barbarous spirit of the age, had received from the Duke of Mantua a protection, or license, for following his dreadful trade. Crichton, being informed of the Duke's regret on this occasion, and of the murder of three persons in cold blood by the practised fencer, at once offered to fight him for a large sum; a proposal reluctantly acceded to by the Duke, who valued Crichton highly, and dreaded the encounter. But the day came; and, in the sight of an assembled multitude, the elegant and skilful youth showed perfection in his art,—content with guarding and defending; until his enraged antagonist, tired with repeated and ineffective thrusts, began to give him an advantage, which Crichton secured by despatching him with three rapid wounds through his body. To crown the glory of the day, he divided the prize of victory between the widows of those whom the man of blood had slaughtered.

We now approach the end of this "strange eventful history," by recording the circumstances of our young hero's death. Struck with his various abilities, the Duke fixed upon him as tutor to his son, a wild and worthless young man, the charge of whom, however, was so flattering to Crichton, that, to please the court, he immediately wrote a most amusing

\* An original copy of the challenge was lately purchased at the sale of Mr. Heber's books, and is now, we believe, in the possession of a clergyman at Shrewsbury.

comedy, in which he himself acted fifteen different characters, with equal correctness and animation, thus giving proof upon proof of his unequalled genius. But it was decreed that his career in the new and promising office of a prince's tutor was to be but short. From being the principal actor in a Comedy, Crichton soon became the subject of a dreadful Tragedy. He was only in his twenty-second year, when, one night, walking along the streets of Mantua, and playing on his guitar, he was attacked by six persons in masks. They were soon obliged to quit their ground; and owing to his skill and self-possession, he found himself left with only one of the assailing party, the leader, whose sword had been struck out of his hand, and who, taking off his mask, exposed the countenance of Vincentio di Gonzaga, his friend and pupil! The noble Crichton, affected at the sight, instantly fell on his knees, took his own sword by the point, offering it to the prince, and whether he meant it as a touching lesson of generosity for the youth; or whether he felt deeply hurt and grieved at such conduct, which made his life appear of less value to him; or whatever might have been the motive, he placed himself at the mercy of an irritated, or perhaps drunken, profligate, who, the next moment, stabbed Crichton to the heart.

All that public lamentation could do testified the general grief at such a loss. The Court of Mantua went into mourning for him; and, for years subsequently, in token of their respect and affection, the Italian nobility kept portraits of Crichton, in which he is represented with a sword and a book, the emblems of his learning and valour.

His partial, rather than "*honest* chronicler," Urquhart, has, in his blind admiration, gone far beyond what we have put down. He concludes by telling us, that Crichton gained the esteem of kings by his courtly bearing; of knights by his fine sense of honour; of the rich by his affability and pleasant companionship; of the poor by his liberality; of the old by his steadfastness and wisdom; of the young by his cheerfulness; of the learned by his universal knowledge; of the soldiers by his undaunted courage; of merchants and men of business by his clear and upright dealing; and lastly, of the ladies by his handsome person, in which he was, as in other respects, unrivalled.

The character is one, which, whether partly ideal or not, deserves to be studied in many of its features, by our younger readers. They may be assured, from instances of this kind, and from some around them in daily life, that with a desire to excel in their respective callings, and with application and industry, they may surmount difficulties which once appeared beyond their thought of attempting, and arrive at an honourable and unspotted fame. The author of a paper in the *Adventurer*, on the subject before us, founds an argument for zealous exertion, on the distinguished success of certain persons to whom the door of advancement would doubtless have continued closed, had they not acted up to the spirit of the motto which that writer has selected for his essay, and which, we believe, was a favourite with Queen Elizabeth,—"*Nil desperandum*;" *Avaunt, despair!* M.

PHILIP DE MORNAY, in writing to a friend, says, "I will not, on any consideration, take part in an unfair contest, in which all one's efforts are unavailing, and there remains no alternative, but to yield with dishonour. But if truth is the real object of contention, I will carry to the combat a front of brass; and I will prove to all, by the help of God, that those who fear God have nothing else to fear."

## POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

## No. III. A NIGHT ALARM.

It was eleven o'clock at night, and four young and lovely sisters had assembled in one room to hear the contents of an interesting letter which had arrived in the morning. The attention of all was deeply engaged, and nought was heard but the low and gentle voice of the reader, when a faint vibration of the window beneath caused a cessation, and a glance of inquiry from one sister to the other. "It was only the wind," said the reader; and she resumed her happy occupation. After a few more lines, the noise was repeated with greater force, and the youngest of the party sprang on her feet. "What can it be?" said she, in a scarcely audible tone. A long silence followed, and again came the sound, deeper and louder than ever, and continued till the whole window seemed to ring, and to shake in every pane. The house was built not many yards from the sea: no habitation, except the station-towers of the preventive service, stood nearer than a quarter of a mile: the village was even more distant; but the situation was deemed so secure, from its retirement, that there was not even a fastening to the gates at either end of the shrubbery.

"Let us call papa," continued she, "for I am certain it is some one breaking into the dining-room." "Nonsense," observed an elder sister, "no one would think of coming in here, and papa has been fishing all day, so we must not wake him on an uncertainty. Look out, and see if any one is on the lawn." No one, however, dared venture to go near the window, and the noise was reiterated with such force, that every rod of iron in the drawing-room balcony, close by, seemed to vibrate with the efforts on the ground-floor. "This is too much," said the eldest, who had been hitherto silent; and all rushed into the gallery behind the room. They proceeded to the chamber of a friend, who was visiting at the house, and knocked at her door: on her opening it, the matter was whisperingly explained, and all five returned where the noise had been heard, placed the candle in the gallery outside, and, shutting the door, waited in breathless silence. Courage was soon assumed to look out into the garden; but all there was still.

Reflection however seemed at length to convince the party that their fear was absurd; for being only an occasional residence, no property of value which could afford temptation was kept there. But there was the noise, and whence could it proceed? A walk along the cliffs, taken on that very evening, had discovered some haunts of smugglers; besides which, one of the ladies had seen two men stealing along where there was no path, just at dusk. Smugglers, therefore, were suggested as the primary cause of the alarm, and this idea was much more tolerable to the ladies than that of house-breakers. But, in the midst of these deliberations and reflections, shake went the window, ring went the balcony, screech went the boat upon the shingles (as they thought), and away rushed the ladies to the door of the sleeping host, whose good-humoured readiness, and speedy appearance, showed that there need have been no hesitation in asking his help. The fears were soon related, the noise was listened for, but in vain: the house was inspected, the females following at a respectful distance, though, of course, ready to attack any body who might endanger the safety of papa. But there was neither trace of kegs, nor of bales, nor were footsteps to be perceived in the soft gravel, or dewy lawn in the garden; and at length the master of the house,

quietly asking his daughters and his guest, if they were satisfied that all was safe, advised them to retire to rest. He himself soon gave audible proofs that he had resumed his slumbers; and when their tongues were weary of uttering conjectures, the ladies thought proper to go to bed also.

No second alarm occurred during a fortnight's further sojourn by the sea, and complete confidence was restored.

In the course of the ensuing summer, a near relation of the proprietor of this beautiful spot, with his wife and family, went to the same house for the sake of the sea-air. After a few days' stay, the husband left home, and, on his return, fancied that he saw an unusually grave expression on the countenances of his lady and her attendants; but it was so slight that he did not make any remark upon it. The evening closed in, and taking their station in the dining-room, the lady occupied herself with her needle, and the gentleman began to answer the letters which had awaited his arrival. An unbroken silence ensued, which was interrupted by a low and gentle sound! and the needle fell from the lady's fingers. In half a minute the noise was increased to a shrill, grating vibration, and gradually subsided into the softest and most melodious tones that ever issued from an *Æolian* harp. Occasionally it stopped, then rising to its utmost strength, the whole window shook, and the bars of the balcony above rang like echoes to the sounds beneath.

"We have heard this before," said the lady, starting up. "I would not tell you of it when you first came in, because I wished you to receive the full impression of this mystery. We have searched in every direction; we have listened and watched; we have done every thing in our power to account for it, but in vain; and the servants are more than half persuaded that it is supernatural." She was interrupted by a return of the noise: it recommenced with a harsh, grating sound, and appeared now to come from the ceiling, now from the window, and now from the earth. At times it was so loud, that the lady and gentleman thought it was a boat hauled ashore, and flew to the window. A bright moonlight night rendered every thing visible; but nothing of the kind was to be seen. The sound gradually ceased, as if retiring to a distance; and for the first time in his life, the husband experienced a superstitious feeling creeping over him, and began to think that there was more reason than he chose to acknowledge in the superstitions of his servants.

On the ensuing day, every endeavour was made to find out the cause of this mysterious music; but it baffled all research, and defied every conjecture. The evening advanced, and all remained perfectly quiet: the lady and gentleman went into the next room to partake of some refreshment, and the music recommenced exactly in the same manner as before. The gentleman returned alone to the larger room, without a light; and, seating himself in the middle of the room, so as to be able to see all around him, determined not to go to bed till he had fully investigated the matter. He at length felt sure that the tones proceeded from the window; and, approaching it, he anxiously watched the shore and the sea, by the occasional and fitful gleams of moonlight. After a few minutes, the tones seemed to proceed from behind him; and, turning his head quickly round, they at the same moment appeared to come from the window beside him. A feeling of awe, and perhaps terror, now assailed him; but he argued that if he did not now convince himself of the fact, he should be for ever disturbed with the recollection of the circumstance:

mastering, therefore, his half-formed fears, he went to the window, and leaned his head against it.

The music then seemed to be close to his face, and, for a moment, he recoiled, but fixing his eyes upon the same pane of glass, he beheld a dark spot upon the window. He tried to lay hold of it, but it eluded his grasp, and the tones continued with more beauty than ever. At length he struck the window smartly, and all was still. He immediately procured a candle, and calling his wife and servants, proceeded with them to the inspection of the mysterious spot. The music became loud and shrill, but the light discovered that all these vibrations, these *Æolian* sounds, these harsh gratings, these awful and heavenly tones, these attempts at robbery, and these frightened smugglers, were occasioned by—a simple snail, which was crawling across the pane! As it drew nearer to the centre of the pane, the sounds became deeper and fuller; as it approached the edge, they were shrill as a sife. The occasional touching of its shell, in its course, and the greater or less sliminess of the animal, produced the vibrations and harsh gratings, the former of which were increased according to their vicinity to the framework; and as there were several snails crawling along at the same time, in different parts of the same window, and in different windows, the varied position of the sounds at the same moment was easily accounted for.

A fiction of no small interest might perhaps have been founded on the above reality; but the writer has preferred a plain statement of facts, from the idea that many a mysterious story may be cleared up by bearing them in recollection. There is no feeling so painful or overpowering as that arising from the idea of supernatural visitations: the stoutest hearts quail under it. Men, whose personal efforts and heroic bravery have contributed to their country's glory, have felt their best energies thus paralyzed; and the weak, the nervous, and the ignorant, have sometimes lost their reason from superstitious fear. It is therefore impossible to be too careful in the investigation of what appears to be, at first sight, unaccountable.

[Abridged from the FORGET ME NOT.]

## BEES.

WHEN the queen-bee is forcibly taken away from the hive, the bees which are near her at the time, do not soon appear sensible of her absence, and the labours of the hive are carried on as usual. It is seldom before the lapse of an hour, that the working-bees begin to manifest any symptoms of uneasiness: they are then observed to quit the larvæ which they had been feeding, and to run about in great agitation, to and fro, near the cell which the queen had occupied before her abduction. They then move over a wider circle, and on meeting with such of their companions as are not aware of the disaster, communicate the intelligence by crossing their antennæ, and striking lightly with them. The bees which receive the news, become in their turn agitated, and conveying this feeling wherever they go, the alarm is soon participated by all the inhabitants of the hive. All rush forwards, eagerly seeking their lost queen; but after continuing their search for some hours, and finding it to be fruitless, they appear resigned to their misfortune, the noisy tumult subsides, and the bees quietly resume their labours.

A bee, deprived of its antennæ, immediately becomes dull and listless: it desists from its usual labours, remains at the bottom of the hive, seems



attracted only by the light, and takes the first opportunity of quitting the hive, never more to return. A queen-bee, thus mutilated, ran about without apparent object, as if in a state of delirium, and was incapable of directing her trunk with precision, to the food which was offered to her. Latreille relates that, having deprived some labouring ants of their antennæ, he replaced them near the nest; but they wandered in all directions, as if bewildered, and unconscious of what they were doing. Some of their companions were seen to notice their distress, and approaching them with apparent compassion, applied their tongues to the wounds of the sufferers, and anointed them with their saliva. This trait of sensibility was repeatedly witnessed by Latreille, while watching their movements with a magnifying glass.—DR. ROGET'S *Bridge-water Treatise*.

The following incident, illustrative of the affection of bees for their queen, is very graphically described by Mr. Bagster, in his work on the *Management of Bees*, an occupation to which the author seems to be enthusiastically attached. Our readers are probably not aware that the process of taking the honey is not necessarily attended, as was formerly the case, with the destruction of the wonderful little insects, who with so much labour and skill have hoarded their treasures as a provision against future exigencies. A species of large mushroom (*Fungus maximus*), commonly known by the name of "bunt," "puckfist," or "frog-cheese," is humanely employed by those who wish to spare the lives of their bees, whilst taking possession of their sweets. A small piece of this "puck," previously dried, and properly prepared, being ignited and placed underneath a hive, operates by its vapour as a powerful narcotic upon the bees, which fall unhurt into an empty hive, placed to receive them. By exposure to the fresh air, these bees are soon restored to health and activity; when they set about repairing the loss which, during the temporary suspension of their busy existence, they have sustained. Mr. Bagster had been taking some stocks of honey, in the way we have just mentioned, when an accident happening to one of his hives, the queen bee was thrown out, and a scene of distress and considerable confusion ensued.

"I thought," says Mr. Bagster, "that I might have put the queen into possession amongst some of the comb; but to be certain, I gathered up every bee I could find, and put the emptied hives on their side against mine, so that the queen might have every opportunity to get in, if not already there. The profusion of spilt honey, the hot weather, and the bees from my other hives, caused a great commotion, so that the real cause, the absence of the queen, was undiscovered. The next day the same hurly-burly continued; when, fearing that my queen was unseated, I took an apiarian friend to form a judgment. It was his opinion that there surely was a queen in my new hive, or that, if destroyed, one soon would be made out of the brood-comb. I pointed to groups of bees on the grass, and around the stand, still fearing that my queen was among them; but he so positively said such was not the fact, that I did not then examine any of the masses. Naturally inquisitive under such circumstances, I visited my perturbed hive late in the evening, and found, while the others were quiet, that this was in an uncomfortable state. All the masses or companies of bees, which had been licking up the dropping sweets through the day, had now retired, save only one lot, about as large and as round as a small cricket-ball. At dark I again visited them,—hope revived, for the mass remained unmoved: by the earliest peep

of day I rose from bed, after a sleepless night to look for my beauty.

"I confess myself an enthusiast; I laid myself at full length on the grass, and with my hand gently opened the benumbed, but still clustering, mass: there was the queen, surrounded by her faithful and watchful subjects, paralyzed, and to all appearance quite dead. I picked her up, placed her in my hands, breathed upon and cherished her for a considerable time, until, I think with joy of a new kind, I saw her move one joint of one leg: my tender care was renewed until the sun had mounted high in the heavens, and by his beams renewed the perturbation of the defenceless hive. The demonstrations of misery were renewed tenfold when any one approached the hive; and then, indeed, courage was necessary, for the bees had just missed their queen. To those alone who have witnessed such commotion can an idea be conveyed.

"Now came the delightful scene,—my queen was restored by the genial warmth of my hand, and walked comfortably about it; the bees, her subjects, were whirling in incensed crowds around the hive: the buzz of discontent was incessant, and clearly marked. At this moment, I called all who were in the house, to witness the scene. I placed the queen on the alighting-board at the door of the hive: she was recognised in a moment; the pass-touch, or pass-word, or pass-hum, was communicated. The great commotion was instantly changed to peace. She was caressed,—licked over and fondled,—the bees pressing round, who, with an affection worthy of the best subjects of a beloved monarch, showed their attachment in terms that even human tongues could not exceed.

"From that moment all was peace, and harmony, and joyful labour. Very few of the brood were destroyed by the accident which gave rise to the development of this peculiar instinct; and I hope I treasure up the remembrance of the circumstance, as one more proof of the truth of that passage of Scripture, 'God doeth great things, and unsearchable; marvellous things without number.'" O. N.

THE lives of most are mispent only for want of a certain end of their actions: wherein they do as unwise archers, shoot away their arrows they know not at what mark. Others aim at a certain mark, but a wrong one. Some, (though fewer,) level at the right end, but amiss. To live without one main and common end, is idleness and folly. To live to a false end, is deceit and loss.—BISHOP HALL.

#### RUINS OF THE PRIORY CHURCH OF ST. BOTOLPH, AT COLCHESTER.

THE present town of Colchester occupies the site of what was formerly a military colony of the Romans, under the Emperor Claudius. The revolutions of ages, and the desolating power of war, have destroyed the numerous buildings which were erected here by that warlike nation, and the only remains of their exertions consist of its ruined walls, tessellated pavements, which have been discovered at various times, coins, urns, lamps, and medals. History informs us that "the Roman temples were overthrown in this country by the converts to Christianity, who raised on their ruins Christian churches, of which tradition has handed down to us many instances, particularly in the Abbey Churches of Westminster and Bath." This of St. Botolph\*, it is probable, was similarly founded, as in 1738, several Roman urns, with a

\* Botolph, by whose name three churches in London are called, was a British Saint, having been born in Cornwall, and (as it was alleged) worked miracles about the time of King Lucius.

lamp, some pieces of melted metal, and two coins of Domitian, were discovered just within its gate.

After the departure of the Romans, and particularly under the Saxon, Danish, and early Norman rulers, this town was distressed by repeated sieges; and its fortifications and public edifices must have suffered severely in these conflicts.

Among the ancient religious edifices which were erected at Colchester, the Priory Church of St. Botolph presents the most considerable remains. This singular and curious structure becomes eminently interesting to the architectural antiquary, from its style of building, the materials employed, and the time of its erection. Composed almost entirely of *Roman bricks or wall-tiles*, with arches, columns, and piers, nearly resembling some Roman edifices, and being very dissimilar to any other ancient structure in this country; we are anxious to ascertain the time and mode of its construction, and also to examine and compare its collective and component parts. It is said to have been founded by Eynulph, or Ernulph, a monk, in the beginning of the reign of Henry the First, about which time, many large and splendid religious buildings were erected; but the buildings of that time, and even those before, displayed a more advanced style of architecture, as may be seen in the ancient chapel of the Tower of London, Rochester Castle, and Cathedral, &c. The columns, mouldings of arches, and general ornaments of all these structures, exhibit more skilful finishing. Mr. Carter observes that St. Botolph's Church was erected about the end of the eleventh century, and like the Abbey Church of St. Alban's, was built out of the ruins of some neighbouring Roman edifice, with the same kind of materials, and much in the same style; with this

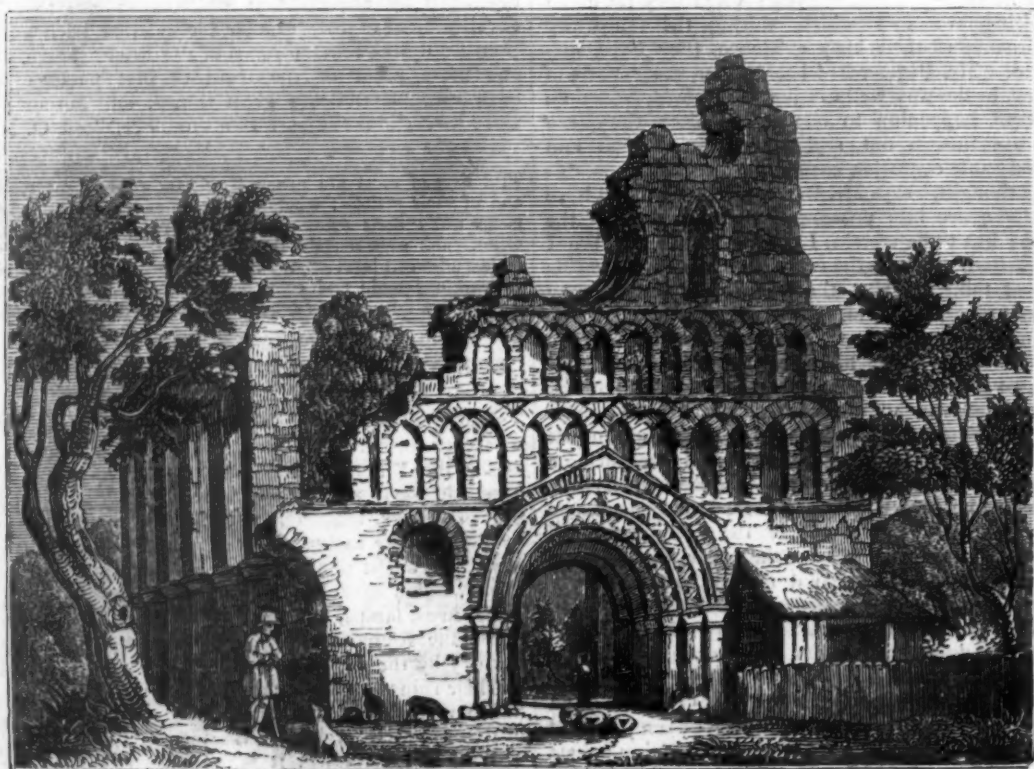
difference, that the column here is the principal feature.

In examining and describing the remains of this structure, we remark that simplicity and solidity appear to have been the governing principles of the architect. The walls are thick, firm, and strong, externally supported or strengthened with a kind of pilaster-buttress; and in the western front, where the greatest height was required and weight given, its strength was increased by numerous arches constructed in the wall, like some in the Pantheon and other buildings at Rome. The tiers of intersecting arches, however, could not have been intended merely for utility, but must have been considered ornamental.

The present shattered state of the buildings could only have arisen from the application of great violence; they are traditionally said to have been battered down during the Civil Wars in 1648, when Colchester suffered very materially in its public buildings and private property. The bricks employed in this building, and of which it is almost wholly composed, are certainly of Roman manufacture, and the whole surface, externally and internally, was cased with very fine plaster or stucco; the shape or construction of the arches coincide with various ancient examples, among which we may refer to some used in Dioclesian's Bath, the Temple of Minerva Medici, and Adrian's Villa.

The picturesque character of the present ruins will be readily acknowledged by every artist; but this character is considerably heightened in the building itself, which is richly tinted by the different coloured tile and mortar, and the various mosses, weeds, &c., that besprinkle its surface.

[Abridged from BRITTON's *Architectural Antiquities*.]



RUINS OF ST. BOTOLPH'S, COLCHESTER.